

# impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

## Idaho's 4-H dairy judging invitational focuses on education

### AT A GLANCE

Idaho's dairy industry employs 12.5% of Idaho's workforce population. Idaho's youth need to build dairy knowledge and be aware of career skills sought by employers.

### The Situation

Idaho is the 3rd largest dairy producer in the nation. Idaho has 655,356 cows on 362 dairies and the dairy industry represents 35% of the agricultural sector in Idaho. There are 33,000 employees working for dairy related businesses. Providing education that contributes to Idaho's families is important to improving Idaho's economy. Currently Idaho has 735 youth enrolled in 4-H dairy projects where youth can learn on a local level about the dairy industry. The University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development program is in need of expanding the educational opportunities for these dairy members. Providing statewide events allows youth and adults the opportunity to learn and work from each other on a state level. Furthermore, many national youth dairy events are not available to local youth because Idaho does not have a venue for them to pursue. This is limited to our members. It is important that Idaho be part of the dairy youth efforts that are on a national and global level.

### Our Response

University of Idaho Extension faculty and staff; Cindy Kinder, Scott Nash, Mikayla Lincoln and Kara Jenkins partnered with 4-H volunteer Jennifer Johnson and



4-H members learning about dairy selection from national dairy evaluator Rudy DeWinkle. Photo credit Cindy Kinder.

Meridian Dairy Days and Caldwell Dairy Heifer Program to put on the first Idaho 4-H Dairy Judging Invitational Contest. The invitational was held at the Solid Rock Ranch in Nampa on July 29, 2022, where the contest was hosted by Rudy DeWinkle and his family.

The first statewide dairy judging contest included four different education components to help youth and volunteers understand various pieces of Idaho's dairy industry.

- The day started off with an educational opportunity to learn about animal husbandry and animal evaluation. The evaluation clinic was taught by nationally recognized dairy judging evaluator, Mr. DeWinkle. Youth were able to learn about live animal dairy qualities such as conformation,

structure, production qualities and breed character.

- The judging contest consisted of seven classes of dairy females and two oral reasons classes. Youth were able to see and critically evaluate four different breeds of high-quality dairy cattle. This allows them to see real world differences in breeds and to practice decision making. The oral reasons classes gave youth the opportunity to build their communication skills while they justified their class placings.
- After the judging classes were conducted an in-depth critique of the cattle was offered to the youth so they could better hone their evaluation skills compared to industry standards.
- A showmanship contest was included in the education day, teaching youth about animal handling. Ten youth participated in the event, while 36 other youth listened to professional dairy handler, Isabelle Leonard, from Lallemand Animal Nutrition.
- Youth and adults present were also able to participate in an Agriculture Career Fair to learn about many components of the dairy industry, including markets and marketing, lab testing and dairy production. Youth had the opportunity to learn about what it takes to become employed in those fields.

## Program Outcomes

Youth and adults had multiple opportunities to gain knowledge and skills about Idaho agriculture and the dairy industry. Statewide participation occurred at this educational event. There were 46 youth from eight counties; three districts, plus two FFA chapters who participated in the all-day education event. Forty-six youth participated in the judging contest, and 10 youth participated in the showmanship contest. The judging contest winners are as follows:

- The top senior teams were first place — Gem and Boise counties, second place — Jerome and Ada counties combined team and third place — Ada County.
- The top junior teams were first place — Ada County and second place — Gem and Boise counties.
- The top five showman were from Nampa FFA, Canyon County and Ada County.

## The Future

We look forward to this becoming an annual event and the qualifying contest for Idaho youth to participate in the National Dairy Judging Contest. We also plan to seek out more partners such as state breed associations and commodity groups to include more career fair opportunities and support toward national events.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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